USDA Midwest Climate Hub
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

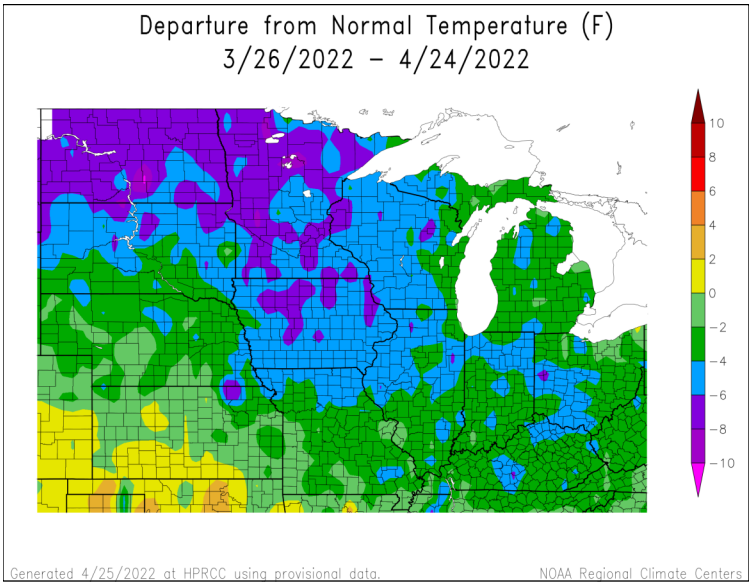
April 26, 2022

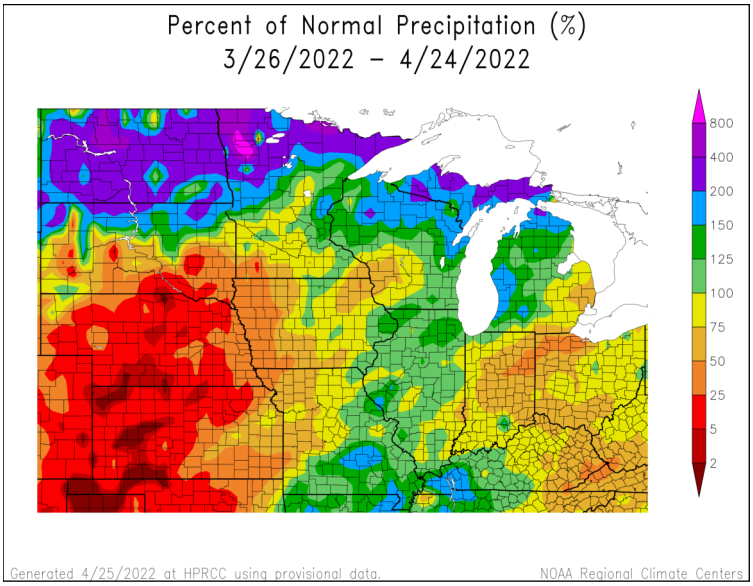
Midwest Ag-Focus Climate Outlook

Main Points

- Temperatures have continued to be cooler than average.
- Precipitation has caused various issues.
  - ◊ Eastern areas of the Midwest and increasingly in the northern Plains are abnormally wet.
  - ◊ Some soil moisture recovery has occurred in the central parts of the region.
  - ◊ Western parts of the region continue to be dry.
- Soil temperatures are marginal for planting most row crops and will warm slowly.
- Heading into May, temperatures will warm.
- Overall, planting will progress slowly.

Current Conditions





Temperatures have been unexpectedly colder over the last few weeks, slowing agricultural activity. The entire region has been 4 to 8°F colder than average over the last 30 days, especially from North Dakota to Iowa, leading to colder soils and slower crop development. Precipitation has continued to vary across the region. Northern areas, Illinois, and parts of Missouri have been wetter than usual at 150 to 400% of average. The Plains have continued to be drier than average, and there has been some drying in the eastern Midwest. Areas from South Dakota to Kansas have received less than 25% of average precipitation in the last 30 days. Partners in the eastern Corn Belt have noted that, overall, precipitation events have not been sizeable, but multiple smaller events have added to greater-than-average totals.

Images from High Plains Regional Climate Center (HPRCC), Online Data Services: ACIS Climate Maps. Generated: 4/26/2022.

Impacts

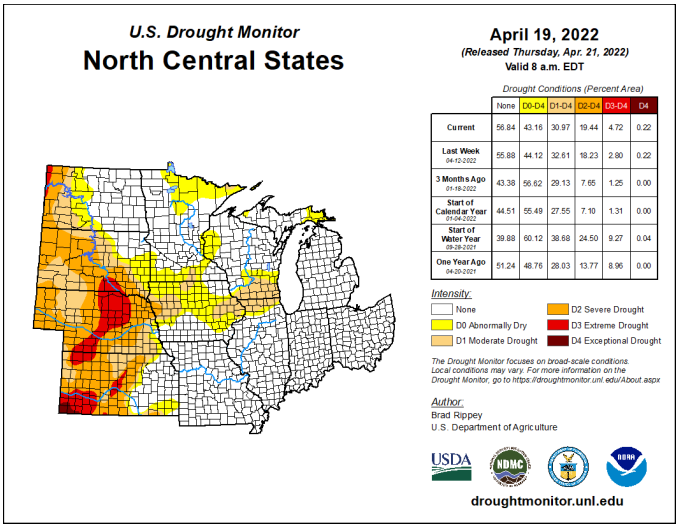
Impacts have been wide-ranging and mixed for agriculture. The cold temperatures have kept soils too cool for most corn and soybean planting. Drier conditions in the northern Plains did allow for some small grains progress. Some southern areas have had soil temperatures closer to 50°F threshold. Further north, colder soil temperatures have continued, with some reports of refreezing.

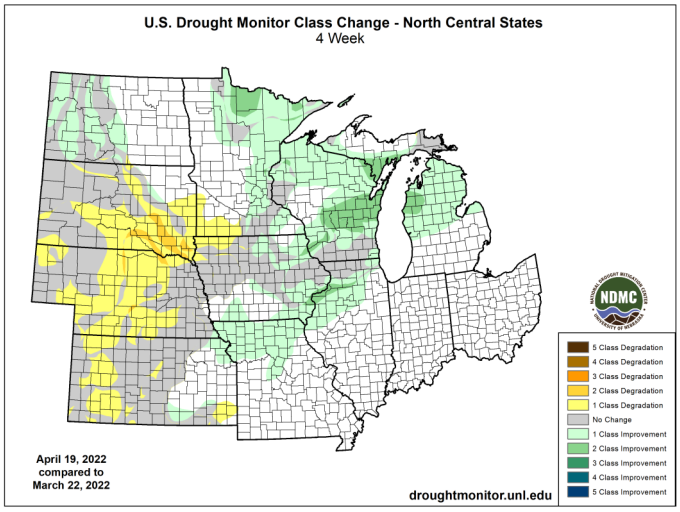
Cooler air temperatures have been good for cool season grasses in Missouri (based on a local report) and slowed some progress on perennials, fruit trees, etc., so far avoiding most of the freeze risk. Annuals have made the most progress in the plains (small grains). Corn and soy have had minimal progress throughout the region.

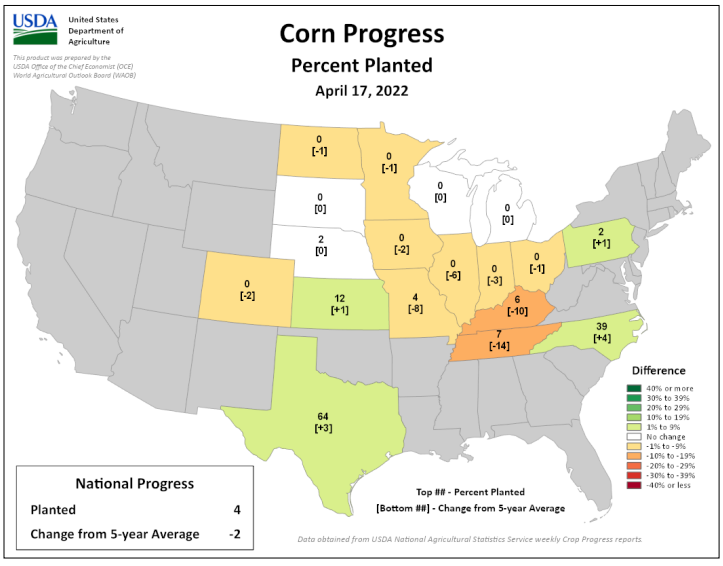
Drought has also varied. Recent precipitation has helped ease drought in Minnesota, Wisconsin, Iowa, and Illinois, but drought has continued or worsened in the Plains.

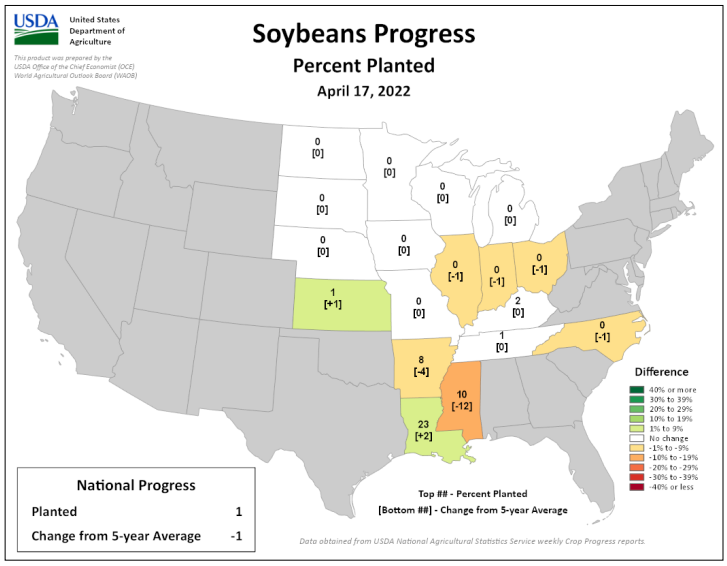
Recent blizzards and subsequent conditions have caused problems for calving and lambing in the northern Plains. Impact information is still being gathered.

The Midwest Climate Hub would like to hear reports of damage to any crop or horticultural in your region.









Maps Generated by the National Drought Mitigation Center and the National Agricultural Statistic Service.

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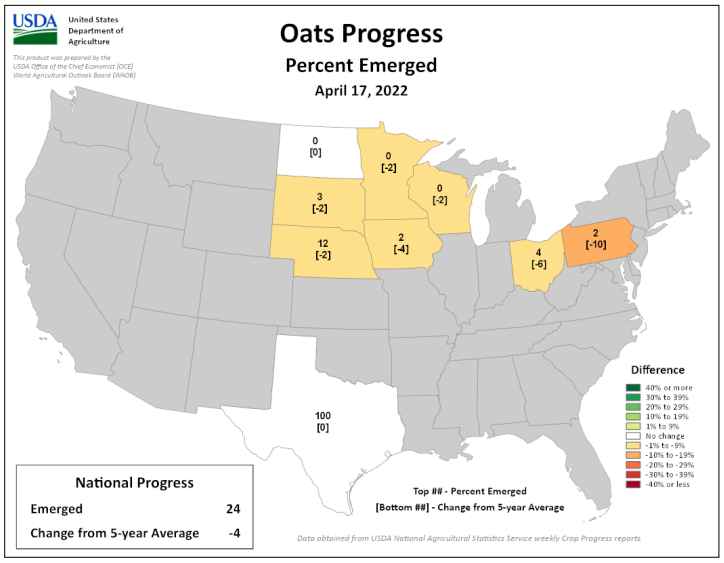
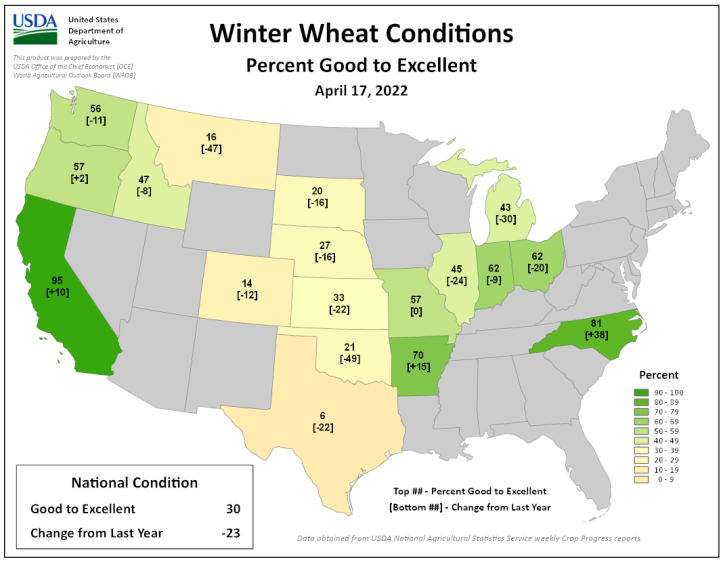




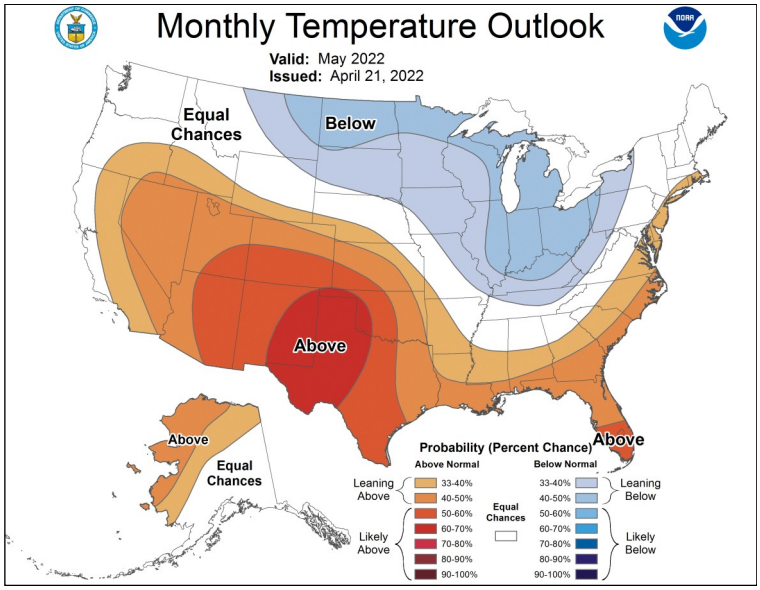
Outlook

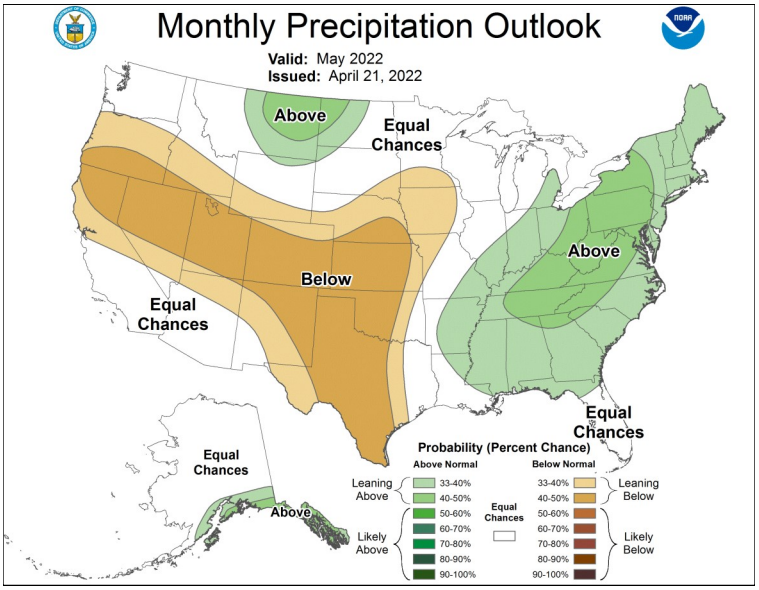
The new May and seasonal outlooks present a few challenges for agriculture and are generally consistent with the outlooks that were released last month.

The May temperature outlook has increased chances for colder than average temperatures (particularly for early May) across much of the northern Plains to the eastern Corn Belt. Slight chances for wetter conditions exist in Montana, North Dakota, and along the Ohio River. There is a fairly large chance for drier-than-average conditions in the central Plains and Iowa.

The seasonal outlooks continue the La Niña-type pattern with warmer and drier conditions more likely in the Plains, with some chances for wetter conditions in the eastern Corn Belt. Drier and warmer conditions could extend into the central Corn Belt as the summer progresses.

For agriculture, several dynamics are in play. Slow planting progress could continue into early May because of the potential for cooler conditions and wetness from recent precipitation in some areas. Prevented planting could occur in a few isolated locations.





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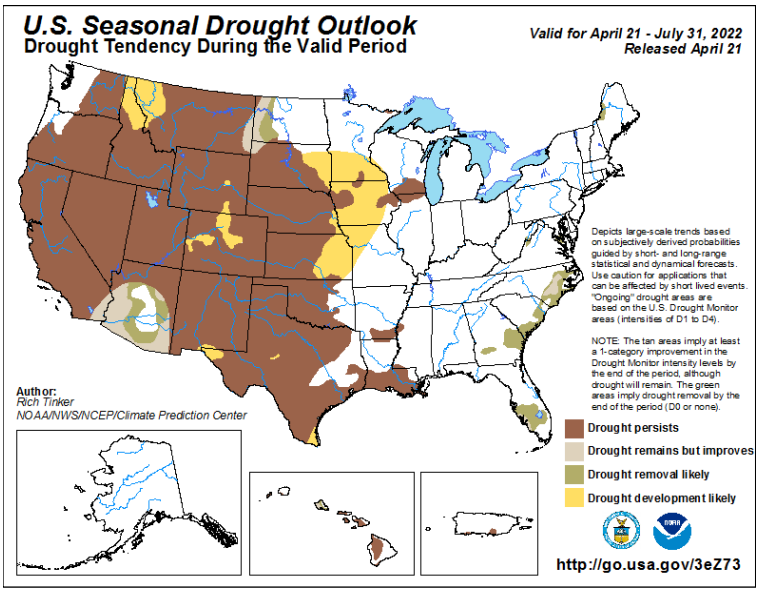
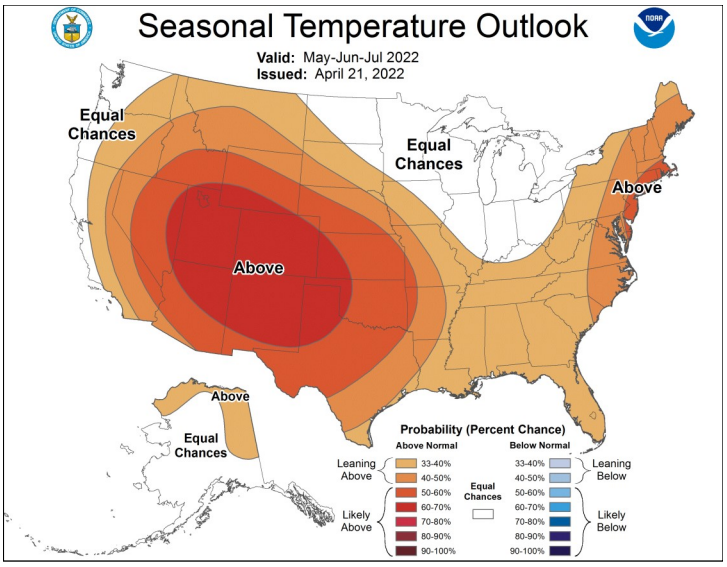
The central to southern Plains areas seem likely to continue with drought issues; planting might occur in very dry conditions. Some irrigation has been reported already. The northern Plains outlooks are mixed, with some cooler temperatures and some precipitation to mitigate drought, late enough in the spring to have a large impact.

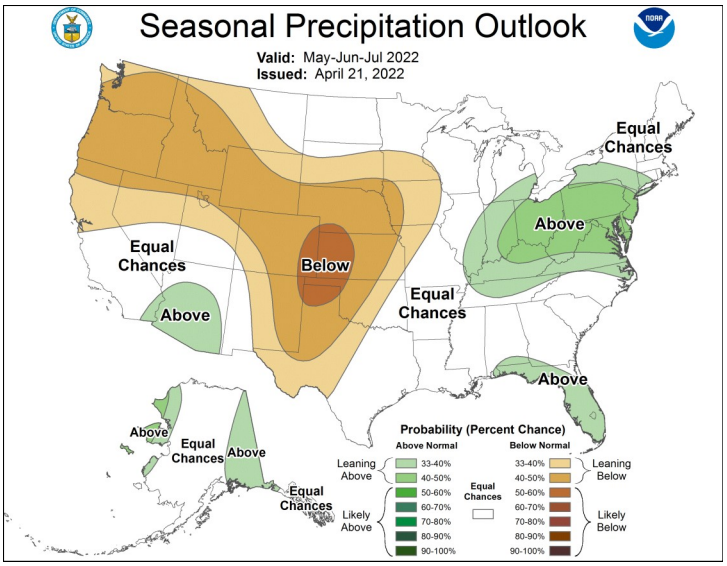
For summer, the higher likelihood of heat and dryness in the Plains could allow drought issues to persist and could expand northward and eastward. At this point, the eastern Corn Belt is at less risk, where outlooks shift from the wetter-than-average conditions there recently.

Email the Midwest Climate Hub to join our list of subscribers.



Outlooks provided by the Climate Prediction Center.





Partners and Contributors

United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)
Climate Prediction Center (CPC)
National Weather Service (NWS)
National Center for Environmental Information (NCEI)
National Drought Mitigation Center (NDMC)
National Integrated Drought Information System (NIDIS)
Midwestern Regional Climate Center (MRCC)
Midwest State Climatologists
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